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MATTAPAN/FRANKLIN

STATUS REPORT

JUNE, 1972

Boston Redevelopment Authority
Planning Department
Mattapan-Franklin District Planning Program

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDED IMPROVEMENTS

1. Immediate Improvements

   a. Remove 38 billboards

   b. Demolish 15 vacant structures along Blue Hill Avenue

   c. Alter Mattapan Square circulation and signs

   d. Begin reconstruction of Franklin Field

   e. Advance T.O.P.I.C.S. priorities

   f. Investigate inclusion of apartments on Blue Hill Avenue in Project Rehab

2. Longer Range Improvements

   a. Undertake renewal of Blue Hill Avenue commercial strip from Morton Street to Franklin Field

   b. Include Franklin Field neighborhood in a concentrated code enforcement type program

   c. Develop Mildred Ave. site for Housing and/or community facilities

   d. Develop Boston Sanatorium site for school and/or housing

   e. Develop school and housing on Livermore Street site

   f. Include Mattapan in Abandonment Prevention area

   g. New residential, office and retail development in Mattapan

   h. Undertake renewal effort in Tucker Street/Woodrow Avenue area

TABLE OF CONTENTS

		Page
A.	INTRODUCTION	1
B.	DEVEOPLMENT ACTIVITIES SINCE 1968	1
C.	TRAFFIC AND STREET IMPROVEMENTS SINCE 1968	4
D.	TREATMENT AREAS	5
E.	VACANT LAND AND DILAPIDATED STRUCTURES	7
F.	DEVELOPMENT POSSIBILITIES	9
G.	BILLBOARDS TO BE DISCONTINUED - 1972	12

A. INTRODUCTION

The problems in Mattapan/Franklin are concentrated along Blue Hill Avenue. This Avenue has been troubled, and neglected, for many years. The extreme deterioration between Morton Street and Franklin Field is a part of the pattern beginning at Blue Hill Avenue's northern terminus, Dudley Street; and which extends to Grove Hall and then down to Morton Street. The riots of 1967 and 1968 along Blue Hill Avenue led to the closing of many shops in the Morton Street and Grove Hall areas, but as a 1968 ABCD report of the riot area has indicated, many of these shops would have gone out of business in any case. To the average person travelling along Blue Hill Avenue every other store seems to be boarded up -- and even some open businesses are operating behind boarded, rather than glass windows. Mattapan Square appears as the only stable, commercial locale along Blue Hill Avenue's entire length.

Statistics for the Mattapan/Franklin portion of Blue Hill Avenue substantiate the above impression. Between Franklin Field and Morton Street, 14 out of 20 blocks require rehabilitation or redevelopment; 15 buildings within this area contain extensive vacant stores. The condition south of Morton Street is much better. No more than 7 of the 29 blocks require rehabilitation or redevelopment.

B. DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES SINCE 1968

Both public and private new construction has occurred or has been planned in Mattapan/Franklin over the last four years.

1. Housing - 13 multi-family developments totaling 930 units have been or will be constructed or rehabilitated in scattered areas:

    a. Lena Park NDP - 250-300 multi-family units are planned for 1975 completion at a total NDP project cost of $1.7 millions.

    b. Infill Housing - 32 units in four locations in Franklin Field. Construction on some is currently taking place.

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c. 236 Rehab - 84 units have been rehabilitated for a total cost of $1.6 millions along American Legion Highway in Franklin Field.

d. Groveland Elderly Public Housing - 64 units are nearing completion along River Street in Lower Mills.

e. Multi-Family Conventional - Since 1968, approximately 500 new apartment units have been completed in five locations in Mattapan. The largest is Fairlawn Apartments (250 units) along Cummins Highway.

2. Commercial - limited construction has occurred in three locations; the only major one being the Star Market Center in Lower Mills. Two minor include:

a. Dunkin Donuts at Morton Street; and

b. Burger King along Cummins Highway in Mattapan Square.

3. Public Facilities - The City has invested and plans to invest in improved facilities in the area:

a. Mattapan Branch Library - $20,000 of miscellaneous repairs were completed in April 1970.

b. Fire Engine Company #52 - this station, which is to be replaced by the one under construction on Blue Hill Avenue, received $13,000 of renovations in August 1971.

c. Mattapan Chronic Disease Hospital - The City has invested $1,765,000 in this facility between 1968 and 1972.

d. Police District #3 Station - the station is being totally renovated at a cost of $207,500. The work is 40% complete.

e. Bradford Annex School - the City purchased and completely renovated the Beth Hillel Temple in May 1971, at a cost of $615,000.

f. Joseph Lee Elementary School - construction of the school was completed in 1971, at a cost of $7,900,000.

g. Blue Hill Avenue Fire Station - a new fire station costing $750,000

is erected to be completed in March 1973.

h. Mattapan Elementary School - this school, costing $7,000,000 is erected to be completed in 1975 or 1976.

i. Lower Mills Branch Library - a new library costing $750,000 is being planned to replace the existing library located at Washington and Richmond Streets.

4. Parks - the only park in Franklin, Franklin Field, has not been renovated for decades, but Mattapan's two parks, Almont Street and Walker Playground, were improved in 1968-70.

a. In Walker Playground, tennis and basketball courts were lighted and resurfaced (completed in 1969) $38,400;

b. Almont's improvements included tennis, basketball and baseball area lighting and reconstruction (completed in 1968-1970) $146,000;

c. An improvement to Franklin Field is under construction by the Sportsmen's Tennis Club. The Sportsmen's Club is constructing a field house with indoor courts (to be completed in 1973) $175,000. Improvements worth $225,000 are being planned to Franklin Field by the Parks and Recreation Department and BRA.

5. MBTA Station Modernization - the MBTA is planning a modest improvement under its station modernization program to Mattapan Square terminal. Improvements will include new T-signs and upgraded parking area.

C TRAFFIC AND STREET IMPROVEMENTS SINCE 1968

The City's Public Works Department (PWD) has undertaken (or has projects in (1973) planning for) three types of improvements in Mattapan-Franklin: Street Reconstruction, Sidewalk Reconstruction, and Street Surface Coating.

	COMPLETED OR UNDER CONSTRUCTION	IN PLANNING	EST. COST	FT. LENGTH	SOURCE
Street Reconstruction					
Morton Street (Gallivan Blvd. to Dorchester Ave.)	X		145,000	2,900	Chapter 90
Harvard Street (Cummins Highway to Walk Hill Road)	X		155,900	4,100	Chapter 90
Willowood Street (Woodrow Avenue to Norfolk Street)	X		70,000	1,485	City - PWD
Woolson Street (Blue Hill Avenue to Norfolk Street)	X		23,600	1,200	City - PWD
Mattapan Street (Colorado Street to Almont Street)			16,500	400	Chapter 393
River Street (Blue Hill Avenue to Washington St.)		X	350,000	6,850	Chapter 90
Wellington Hill Street (Morton Street to Blue Hill Ave.)		X	230,600	2,940	City - PWD
Almont Street (Walk Hill St. to Blue Hill Ave.)		X	230,600	2,900	City - PWD
Talbot Avenue (Blue Hill Avenue to Norfolk Street)		X	230,000	4,580	Chapter 90
Culbert Street (Woodhaven to End)		X	14,000	410	City - PWD
Sidewalk Reconstruction					
Old Morton Street (Morton Street to River Street)	X		27,100	1,050	City - PWD
Verrill Street (Wollson Street to Morton Street)		X	5,000	500	City - PWD
Blue Hill Avenue (Mattapan Square to American Legion Hgwy)		X	900,000	10,200	City - PWD
Calder Street (American Legion Hgwy to Blue Hill Ave.)		X	9,000	510	City - PWD
Corbet Street (Norfolk Street to Morton Street)		X	30,000	1,050	City - PWD
Callender Street (Don Street to Tucker Street)		X	31,000	1,700	City - PWD
Druid Street (Gallivan Blvd. to Morton Street)		X	21,000	660	City - PWD
Cedar Street (Manchester Street to River Street)		X	19,600	1,000	City - PWD
Savannah Avenue (Cummins Hgwy to Messinger Street)		X	33,500	1,460	City - PWD
Duxbury Road (River Street to Riverdale Road)		X	6,000	450	City - PWD
Colorado Street (Almont Street to Mattapan Street)		X	17,500	350	City - PWD
Street Surface Coating					
Old Morton Street (Morton Street to River Street)	X		27,100	1,050	City - PWD
Corbet Street (Norfolk Street to Morton Street)	X		13,900	1,050	City - PWD
Verrill Street	X		5,000	500	City - PWD
Sutton Street	X				
Culbert Street	X		14,000	410	City - PWD
Callender Street (Don Street to Tucker Street)		X	31,000	1,700	City - PWD
Harvard Street (Donald Street to Blue Hill Avenue)		X	52,000	1,300	City - PWD
Greenock Street (Harvard Street to Blue Hill Ave.)		X	24,000	600	City - PWD
Tucker Street		X	16,000	400	City - PWD
Brockton Street (Cummins Hgwy to Messinger St.)		X	36,000	900	City - PWD
Orlando Street (Messinger Street to End)		X	27,500	550	City - PWD

D. TREATMENT AREAS

The Mattapan-Franklin area has several areas either presently being improved, scheduled for improvement or needing improvement.

1. Existing Treatment Areas

a. Model Cities lies just northwest of Franklin Field and provides social servcies and is sponsoring physical development programs that positively affect the area. However, no part of the Mattapan-Franklin District lies within Model Cities although Model Cities (Sub Areas 5 and 6) and Franklin Field are historically the same neighborhood.

b. Mt. Bowdoin - Codman Square Code Enforcement Area lies just northeast of Franklin Field. This program is in the execution stage. The Fields Corner C.I.P. located further east is scheduled for completion in 1972.

2. Planned Treatment Areas

a. Model Cities Code Enforcement Program - an application for a Community Improvement Program was prepared for Sub Area 6 of Model Cities in 1970, but was not funded by the Federal Government.

b. Lena Park Neighborhood Development Program - a $1.7 million NDP is planned for a 12.9 acre site in Franklin Field for the construction of 250 to 300 units of family housing. An application has been prepared and will be submitted to HUD within three months.

3. Potential Treatment Areas

a. Blue Hill Avenue Renewal between Morton and Westview Streets - 14 of the 20 blocks in this area require redevelopment and rehabilitation.

b. Woodrow Avenue and Norfolk Street Area Renewal - the majority of residential structures in this area are in the latter stages of deterioration and require rehabilitation or in some cases redevelopment.

c. Livermore Street Development - this area contains many vacant lots (about half are city-owned) which have not been developed because of

subsoil and drainage problems.

d. Franklin Field Code Enforcement Program - the Franklin Field neighborhood, (defined as being bounded by Model Cities on the North, Harvard Street on the West, Morton Street on the South and Norfolk Street on the East) is in fair condition and contains a high proportion of owner-occupied dwellings in need of rehabilitation. A Code Enforcement Program with grants for community facilities and public utility improvements would be appropriate for this area.

e. Abandonment Prevention Area - the Mayor's Office has proposed this program in Mattapan below Morton Street to encourage home owners to make repairs to their homes and make it possible for neighborhood groups to develop community projects on City owned land.

E. VACANT LAND AND DILAPIDATED STRUCTURES

1. Vacant Parcels - there are a number of large vacant parcels which have development potential in Mattapan-Franklin.

a. Livermore Street Area - This covers 30 acres (site of the former Mattapan Urban Renewal Project); over ½ of the area is in City ownership; an additional 9 acres in the northeast portion are being planned for a new Mattapan elementary school (K-6).

b. Culbert and Blue Hill Avenue - Vacant parcel (½ acre) having an awkward configuration and topography problems.

c. Boston Sanatorium - an 18 acre tract which is very buildable, bounded on three sides by single family residences; has access problems and will require agreement with hospital before new development could take place.

d. Babson Street and Cookson Terrace - 2.6 acre parcel close to Mattapan Square, but having topography problems.

e. Woodhaven Street (Midland Branch R.R.) - 2 acre parcel in ownership of City, with limited development potential.

f. Blue Hill Avenue - There are only three vacant parcels between Morton Street and Talbot Avenue.

2. Vacant Buildings - Blue Hill Avenue between Mattapan Square and American Legion Highway contains21 vacant buildings which could be reoccupied with businesses (assuming market demand).

3. Structures Warranting Immediate Demolition - Along Blue Hill Avenue are also vacant buildings which are vacant and dilapidated. Approximately 15 of these may warrant immediate demolition. It is recommended that the Building Department inspect these for possible clearance. Following are addresses of these 15 vacant buildings:

764-776 Blue Hill Ave.

842-846 Blue Hill Ave.

852-858 Blue Hill Ave.

986-998 Blue Hill Ave.

1000 Blue Hill Ave.

1008-1012 Blue Hill Ave.

251-253 Callender Street

1026-1028 Blue Hill Ave.

1050-1050B Blue Hill Ave.

1052-1054 Blue Hill Ave.

1056-1060A Blue Hill Ave.

1132-1138 Blue Hill Ave.

676 Morton Street

236-242 Woodrow Ave.

210-216 Woodrow Ave.

4. Deteriorating and Dilapidated Buildings - Deteriorating buildings are generally concentrated north of Morton Street; over 170 structures are dilapidated in Franklin Field. The Woodrow Street area (along the Midland Branch R.R.) is highly deteriorated as is the locale near Talbot and Blue Hill Avenue (partly within the Lena Park NDP area). Upon further study, some of these buildings may warrant demolition while others may warrant rehabilitation.

In Mattapan dilapidated buildings are scattered along Blue Hill Avenue south of Morton Street to Mattapan Square. One deteriorating area is the former Mildred Avenue industrial site (between Walker Playground and Babson St.). Most of the site contains vacant industrial buildings and remains a blight on the surrounding residential area.

F. DEVELOPMENT POSSIBILITIES

1. Housing

LOCATION	SITE SIZE (ACRES)	DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED REUSE	EXISTING USE	COMMENTS
Morton St./West Selden	6.0	Min. 220 Units	Vacant Land	Cambridge Builders, Inc. conducting feasibility study.
Lena Park NDP/Harvard St.	12.9	250-300 Units	Deteriorated Residences and Vacant Land	In Planning
Ormond St.	0.8	32 Units	Vacant Land	Under Consideration
Livermore St.	30 +	New Neighborhood Site 300 Units	Predominantly Vacant Land	BRA Staff Report Completed
Mildred Ave.	6 +	Not Determined	Predominantly Vacant Industrial	E.D.I.C. Site: Developmen opportunity should be studied for industrial or housing reuse.
Boston Sanatorium / River St.	18 +	Not Determined	Excess Hospital Land	Potential housing or new school site
Babson St./CooksonTerrace	2.6	Not Determined	Vacant Land (Abandoned Quarry)	Development Opportunity
Rexford St.	.6	78 Units (Elderly)	Vacant Land Industrial Bldg.	Development Opportunity
MBTA/River St.	2 +	100 Units	Existing Commercial, Post Office, MBTA	Development Opportunity: housing, commercial and parking.
Blue Hill Ave./Woodrow/ Columbine	0.7	75 Units (Elderly)	Partially Vacant Retail	Development Opportunity: Elderly Housing

Housing (continued)

LOCATION	SITE SIZE (ACRES)	DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED REUSE	EXISTING USE	COMMENTS
Blue Hill Ave./Balsam/Columbine	0.7	9 Relocated Units	Commercial	Development Opportunity
" " " /Callender/Balsam	2.51	150 Units	Commercial	Development Opportunity
" " " /Floyd/Callender	0.51	Not Determined	Burnt-Out Commercial	Development Opportunity
" " " /Fabyan/Brookview	0.3	9 + Rehab Units	Residential	Development Opportunity
" " " /Brookview/Hansborough	0.5	4 + Units	Residential	Development Opportunity
" " " /Hansborough/Johnson	0.5	4 + Rehab Units	Residential - Mixed	Development Opportunity
" " " /Landor/Evelyn	2 +	38 + Rehab Units	Residential - Mixed	Development Opportunity
" " " /Goodale Rd.	0.5	Not Determined	Gas Station	Development Opportunity
" " " /Walk Hill St.	0.3	Not Determined	Commercial - Partially Vacant	Development Opportunity
" " "/Culbert St.	0.5	Not Determined	Vacant Land	Development Opportunity
2. Commercial				
Morton/Blue Hill	2.07	25,000 Sq. Ft. Retail Sub-Center	Partially Vacant Commercial	Development Opportunity
Woodr /Morton/Blue Hill	2.0	52,000 Sq. Ft. Rehab Retail	Commercial	Development Opportunity
Morton/West Selden	3.0	41,200 Sq. Ft. Retail	Vacant Land	Star Market Proposal Under Consideration
1593-1609 Blue Hill Ave.	61,296 Sq.Ft.	20,000 Sq. Ft. Warehouse and Storage	Vacant Theatre	Capitol Supply Co. Proposal Under Considera
River St./Mattapan Sq.	10,000 Sq. Ft.	10,000 Sq. Ft. Ground Floor Commercial	Commercial	Development Opportunity

2. Commercial - continued

LOCATION	SITE SIZE (ACRES)	DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED REUSE	EXISTING USE	COMMENTS
Cummins Hgwy./Mattapan Sq.	1 +	120,000 Sq. Ft. (10-stories) Retail, & Office Tower	Supermarket & Vacant Land	Development Opportunity
Stratton/Floyd/Blue Hill Ave.	0.5	Local Retail	Partially Vacant Retail and Offices	Development Opportunity
3. Community Facilties				
Babson St./Mattapan Sq.	1 +	30,000 Sq. Ft. Municipal Center, Post Office, LCH	Gas Station, Vacant Retail, Parking Lot	Development Opportunity
Boston Sanatorium/River St.	Not Determined	Alternative Site: Tileston Replacement School	Vacant Land	Development Opportunity
4. Parks				
Boston State Hospital	3 - 10	Park and/or Community Facility	Vacant Land	

G. BILLBOARDS TO BE DISCONTINUED - 1972

The City of Boston has recommended to the Mass State Outdoor Advertising Board that 35 billboards within Mattapan-Franklin be discontinued as of July 1, 1972. These billboards are located in local business and residentially zoned districts. The City has recommended that over 400 billboards not be renewed as of July 1, 1972 throughout the City.

It is proposed that 38 additional billboards be discontinued by the State. The additional billboards are within the general business zone along Blue Hill Avenue, Morton Street and River Street.

The elimination of billboards is not enough to improve the visual appearance of Mattapan-Franklin; a strict sign control program is needed and should be directed at Blue Hill Avenue commercial areas. This will require cooperation of local merchants and businessmen's associations such as the Mattapan Board of Trade.